

Explanation of how do individuals with multiple sclerosis cope with social isolation

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Abstract

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a progressive neurological disease that can severely affect the psychosocial aspects of primary caregivers of individuals with MS (PCIMS).

Objective: This study aimed to explore the process of social isolation among PCIMS in Kerman, Iran. This study was performed with grounded theory approach through a semi-structured interview with PCIMS (n=15), individuals with MS (n=13), and healthcare providers (n=5) who were selected through purposive and theoretical sampling in Kerman, Iran, during February 2017-April 2018. The data were analyzed through constant comparison method recommended by Corbin and Strauss.

Results: Yield of this study was a theory in which "social isolation" was recognized as a core variable. "Lack of awareness and information", "Occupational Difficulties", "Marital Difficulties", and "Endeavor to Reduce Restrictions" were the other extracted concepts that were related to the core variable which altogether contributed to its exploration.

Conclusion: The results of this study showed that social isolation could endanger the well-being of PCIMS. This is the first study which shows to reduce the social isolation of PCIMS it is needed to address both the mutual needs and interests of the caregiver and the care-recipient. Therefore, occupational therapists are advised to design appropriate co-occupations based on the mutual needs and interests of the caregivers and the care-recipients to reduce the social isolation of these caregivers. For an in-depth examination, it is also suggested that studies be conducted discovering relationships between the concepts found in this theory.



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